Remarks

No new matter has been added. The specification has been amended merely to replace the sequence listing, to comply with relevant trademark rules and to insert a sequence identifier.

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.821(g), this submission includes no new matter.

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.821(f), the paper copy of the substitute Sequence Listing and the computer readable copy of the substitute Sequence Listing submitted herewith in the above application are the same.

It is respectfully believed that this application is now in condition for examination. Early notice to this effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.

Peter A. Jackman
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 45,986

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1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005-3934
(202) 371-2600

Version With Markings To Show Changes Made

In the Specification:

The paragraph beginning on page 39, line 32 was replaced with the following paragraph:

More recently, a method has also been devised which allows direct quantification of antigen-specific T cells by staining with Fluorescein-labelled HLA tetrameric complexes (Altman, J. D. *et al.*, *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* 90:10330, 1993; Altman, J. D. *et al.*, *Science* 274:94, 1996). Other relatively recent technical developments include staining for intracellular lymphokines, and interferon release assays or ELISPOT™ assays. Tetramer staining, intracellular lymphokine staining and ELISPOT™ assays all appear to be at least 10-fold more sensitive than more conventional assays (Lalvani, A. *et al.*, *J. Exp. Med.* 186:859, 1997; Dunbar, P. R. *et al.*, *Curr. Biol.* 8:413, 1998; Murali-Krishna, K. *et al.*, *Immunity* 8:177, 1998).

The paragraph beginning on page 43, line 18 was replaced with the following paragraph:

In some instances it may be desirable to combine the class I peptide vaccines of the invention with vaccines which induce or facilitate neutralizing antibody responses to the target antigen of interest, particularly to viral envelope antigens. A preferred embodiment of such a composition comprises class I and class II epitopes in accordance with the invention. An alternative embodiment of such a composition comprises a class I and/or class II epitope in accordance with the invention, along with a PADRE™® (Epimmune, San

Diego, CA) molecule (described in the related U.S.S.N. 08/485,218, which is a CIP of U.S.S.N. 08/305,871, now U.S. Patent Number 5,736,142, which is a CIP of abandoned application U.S.S.N. 08/121,101.) Furthermore, any of these embodiments can be administered as a nucleic acid mediated modality.

The paragraph beginning on page 46, line 9 was replaced with the following paragraph:

A growing body of experimental evidence demonstrates that a number of different approaches are available which allow simultaneous delivery of multiple epitopes. Nucleic acids encoding the peptides of the invention are a particularly useful embodiment of the invention. Epitopes for inclusion in a minigene are preferably selected according to the guidelines set forth in the previous section. A preferred means of administering nucleic acids encoding the peptides of the invention uses minigene constructs encoding a peptide comprising one or multiple epitopes of the invention. The use of multi-epitope minigenes is described below and in, *e.g.* An, L. and Whitton, J. L., *J. Virol.* 71:2292, 1997; Thomson, S. A. *et al.*, *J. Immunol.* 157:822, 1996; Whitton, J. L. *et al.*, *J. Virol.* 67:348, 1993; Hanke, R. *et al.*, *Vaccine* 16:426, 1998. For example, a multi-epitope DNA plasmid encoding nine dominant HLA-A*0201- and A11-restricted epitopes derived from the polymerase, envelope, and core proteins of HBV and HIV, the PADRE™® universal helper T cell (HTL) epitope, and an endoplasmic reticulum-translocating signal sequence was engineered. Immunization of HLA transgenic mice with this plasmid construct resulted in strong CTL induction responses against the nine epitopes tested, similar to those observed with a lipopeptide of known immunogenicity in humans, and significantly greater than

immunization in oil-based adjuvants. Moreover, the immunogenicity of DNA-encoded epitopes *in vivo* correlated with the *in vitro* responses of specific CTL lines against target cells transfected with the DNA plasmid. Thus, these data show that the minigene served to both: 1.) generate a CTL response and 2.) that the induced CTLs recognized cells expressing the encoded epitomes.

The paragraph beginning on page 48, line 18 was replaced with the following paragraph:

Therapeutic quantities of plasmid DNA can be produced for example, by fermentation in *E. coli*, followed by purification. Aliquots from the working cell bank are used to inoculate growth medium, and grown to saturation in shaker flasks or a bioreactor according to well known techniques. Plasmid DNA can be purified using standard bioseparation technologies such as solid phase anion-exchange resins supplied by QIAGEN®, Inc. (Valencia, California). If required, supercoiled DNA can be isolated from the open circular and linear forms using gel electrophoresis or other methods.

The paragraph beginning on page 51, line 3 was replaced with the following paragraph:

Alternatively, it is possible to prepare synthetic peptides capable of stimulating T helper lymphocytes, in a loosely HLA-restricted fashion, using amino acid sequences not found in nature (*see, e.g.*, PCT publication WO 95/07707). These synthetic compounds called Pan-DR-binding epitopes (*e.g.*, PADRE™®, Epimmune, Inc., San Diego, CA) are

designed on the basis of their binding activity to most HLA-DR (human HLA class II) molecules. For instance, a pan-DR-binding epitope peptide having the formula: aKXVWANTLKAAa (SEQ ID NO:3877), where "X" is either cyclohexylalanine, phenylalanine, or tyrosine, and a is either D-alanine or L-alanine, has been found to bind to most HLA-DR alleles, and to stimulate the response of T helper lymphocytes from most individuals, regardless of their HLA type.

The paragraph beginning on page 57, line 22 was replaced with the following paragraph:

Epstein-Barr virus (EBV)-transformed homozygous cell lines, fibroblasts, CIR, or 721.22 transfectants were used as sources of HLA class I molecules. These cells were maintained *in vitro* by culture in RPMI 1640 medium supplemented with 2mM L-glutamine (GIBCO®, Grand Island, NY), 50μM 2-ME, 100μg/ml of streptomycin, 100U/ml of penicillin (Irvine Scientific) and 10% heat-inactivated FCS (Irvine Scientific, Santa Ana, CA). Cells were grown in 225-cm^2 tissue culture flasks or, for large-scale cultures, in roller bottle apparatuses. The specific cell lines routinely used for purification of MHC class I and class II molecules are listed in Table XXIV.

The paragraph beginning on page 58, line 4 was replaced with the following paragraph:

HLA molecules were purified from lysates by affinity chromatography. Lysates prepared as above were passed twice through two pre-columns of inactivated Sepharose® CL4-B and protein A-Sepharose®. Next, the lysate was passed over a column of Sepharose®

CL-4B beads coupled to an appropriate antibody. The antibodies used for the extraction of HLA from cell lysates are listed in Table XXV. The anti-HLA column was then washed with 10-column volumes of 10mM Tris-HCL, pH 8.0, in 1% NP-40, PBS, 2-column volumes of PBS, and 2-column volumes of PBS containing 0.4% n-octylglucoside. Finally, MHC molecules were eluted with 50mM diethylamine in 0.15M NaCl containing 0.4% n-octylglucoside, pH 11.5. A 1/25 volume of 2.0M Tris, pH 6.8, was added to the eluate to reduce the pH to ~8.0. Eluates were then be concentrated by centrifugation in Centriprep® 30 concentrators at 2000 rpm (Amicon®, Beverly, MA). Protein content was evaluated by a BCA protein assay (Pierce Chemical Co., Rockford, IL) and confirmed by SDS-PAGE.

The paragraph beginning on page 78, line 16 was replaced with the following paragraph:

Assay for cytotoxic activity: Target cells ($1.0\text{-}1.5 \times 10^6$) are incubated at 37°C in the presence of 200 µl of sodium ^{51}Cr chromate. After 60 minutes, cells are washed three times and resuspended in R10 medium. Peptide is added where required at a concentration of 1 µg/ml. For the assay, 104 ^{51}Cr-labeled target cells are added to different concentrations of effector cells (final volume of 200 µl) in U-bottom 96-well plates. After a 6 hour incubation period at 37°C, a 0.1 ml aliquot of supernatant is removed from each well and radioactivity is determined in a Micromedic® automatic gamma counter. The percent specific lysis is determined by the formula: percent specific release = 100 x (experimental release - spontaneous release)/(maximum release - spontaneous release). To facilitate comparison between separate CTL assays run under the same conditions, % ^{51}Cr release data is expressed as lytic units/10^6 cells. One lytic unit is arbitrarily defined as the number of

effector cells required to achieve 30% lysis of 10,000 target cells in a 6 hour ^{51}Cr release assay. To obtain specific lytic units/10^6, the lytic units/10^6 obtained in the absence of peptide is subtracted from the lytic units/10^6 obtained in the presence of peptide. For example, if 30% ^{51}Cr release is obtained at the E:T of 50:1 (i.e., $5x10^5$ effector cells for 10,000 targets) in the absence of peptide and 5:1 (i.e., $5x10^4$ effector cells for 10,000 targets) in the presence of peptide, the specific lytic units would be: $(1x10^6(5x10^4)-(1x10^6(5x10^5)$ = 18LU/10^6.

The paragraph beginning on page 81, line 21 was replaced with the following paragraph:

Overlapping oligonucleotides, for example eight oligonucleotides, averaging approximately 70 nucleotides in length with 15 nucleotide overlaps, are synthesized and HPLC-purified. The oligonucleotides encode the selected peptide epitopes as well as appropriate linker nucleotides. The final multiepitope minigene is assembled by extending the overlapping oligonucleotides in three sets of reactions using PCR. A Perkin/Elmer® 9600 PCR machine is used and a total of 30 cycles are performed using the following conditions: 95°C for 15 sec, annealing temperature (5° below the lowest calculated Tm of each primer pair) for 30 sec, and 72°C for 1 min.

The paragraph beginning on page 81, line 29 was replaced with the following paragraph:

For the first PCR reaction, 5 μg of each of two oligonucleotides are annealed and extended: Oligonucleotides 1+2, 3+4, 5+6, and 7+8 are combined in 100 μl reactions

containing *Pfu* polymerase buffer (1x= 10 mM KCL, 10 mM $(NH_4)_2SO_4$, 20 mM Tris-chloride, pH 8.75, 2 mM $MgSO_4$, 0.1% Triton® X-100, 100 μg/ml BSA), 0.25 mM each dNTP, and 2.5 U of *Pfu* polymerase. The full-length dimer products are gel-purified, and two reactions containing the product of 1+2 and 3+4, and the product of 5+6 and 7+8 are mixed, annealed, and extended for 10 cycles. Half of the two reactions are then mixed, and 5 cycles of annealing and extension carried out before flanking primers are added to amplify the full length product for 25 additional cycles. The full-length product is gel-purified and cloned into pCR-blunt (Invitrogen®) and individual clones are screened by sequencing.

The paragraph beginning on page 86, line 12 was replaced with the following paragraph:

PBMC from vaccinated individuals are separated on Ficoll-Histopaque density gradients (Sigma Chemical Co., St. Louis, MO), washed three times in HBSS (GIBCO® Laboratories), resuspended in RPMI-1640 (GIBCO® Laboratories) supplemented with L-glutamine (2mM), penicillin (50U/ml), streptomycin (50 μg/ml), and Hepes (10mM) containing 10% heat-inactivated human AB serum (complete RPMI) and plated using microculture formats. Synthetic peptide is added at 10 μg/ml to each well and recombinant HBc Ag is added at 1 μg/ml to each well as a source of T cell help during the first week of stimulation.

The paragraph beginning on page 87, line 1 was replaced with the following paragraph:

Cytotoxicity assays are performed in the following manner. Target cells consist of either allogeneic HLA-matched or autologous EBV-transformed B lymphoblastoid cell line that are incubated overnight with synthetic peptide at 10 μM and labeled with 100 μCi of ^{51}Cr (Amersham® Corp., Arlington Heights, IL) for 1 hour after which they are washed four times with HBSS. Cytolytic activity is determined in a standard 4-h, split well ^{51}Cr release assay using U-bottomed 96 well plates containing 3,000 targets/well. Stimulated PBMC are tested at E/T ratios of 20-50:1 on day 14. Percent cytotoxicity is determined from the formula: 100 x [(experimental release-spontaneous release)/maximum release-spontaneous release)]. Maximum release is determined by lysis of targets by detergent (2% Triton® X-100; Sigma Chemical Co., St. Louis, MO). Spontaneous release is <25% of maximum release for all experiments.

The pending sequence listing was replaced with the substitute sequence listing submitted herewith.